

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A protective foam layer is provided. The protective layer has a foam substrate that is at least partially enclosed by a formed skin adjacent the outer surface of the foam substrate. The formed skin is substantially non-porous. The combination of the foam substrate with the formed skin results in a protective layer that is effective to absorb and/or dissipate impact force for both high- and low-speed impacts that can be experienced during a sporting event such as cycling. The formed skin can also be provided with a plurality of protective zones having vent holes through the formed skin to regulate the degree of energy absorption in the respective zones. In this manner, a single continuous protective foam layer can be provided having multiple protective zones having distinct energy absorption characteristics instead of providing discrete protective layers that must be joined or meet at a seam. According to the invention, by providing such a continuous protective layer with no such seams, a known failure mode in protective equipment is eliminated.